



CU builds for now and later

Bufs host Stanford, hope to finish the week 3-0

By Ryan Thorburn
Sunday, December 2, 2007

It's no secret that Jeff Bzdelik and his staff are looking forward to the arrival of their impressive recruiting class next season.

Colorado's first-year head coach is also working hard to put together a nonconference schedule next season that is more to his liking.

But that doesn't mean the Buffs are all about the future. Senior starters Richard Roby and Marcus Hall showed last week that they are going to do whatever it takes to leave the program with a winning season.

"It is up to us," Roby said before the season at the Big 12 media days. "This is our last go-around and we're not interested too far into the future of Colorado basketball, but how it is right now."

Right now, things are looking up.

During CU's two-game road trip to Denver and Air Force, Roby averaged 18 points on 14-for-20 shooting and Hall averaged 18 points and 39 minutes. Who says you can't teach old dogs new tricks?

"This guy has been fighting for us since May, since he's been here," Hall said of Bzdelik. "And we finally got the opportunity to repay him."

After beating DU 54-44 on Tuesday at Magness Arena, the Buffs snapped Air Force's 38-game home winning streak against nonconference foes with a 60-50 victory at Clune Arena on Thursday. The latter meant a lot to Bzdelik, who was Cadet Enemy No. 1 for two hours after returning to the Academy.

It was the first time since the 1998-99 season, when CU defeated Baylor and Texas Tech in Big 12 play, that CU had posted back-to-back road wins.

Today CU (5-2) will face a difficult challenge at home when Stanford (7-1) visits the Coors Events Center as part of the inaugural Big 12/Pac-10 Hardwood Series. Tip-off is scheduled for 2 p.m. (ESPNU TV, KKZN radio-760 AM).

The Buffs usually start four guards and 6-foot-6 forward Jermyl Jackson-Wilson. The Cardinal has 10 players on its roster listed at at least 6-5, including starting 7-foot forward Robin Lopez (12.4 points, 4.4 rebounds).

CU and its five promising freshmen-to-be will play at Stanford next season. It doesn't sound like the

Falcons will be on the schedule.

"I won't play them," Air Force head coach Jeff Reynolds told the Colorado Springs Gazette. "As long as I'm the basketball coach here and Jeff Bzdelik is the basketball coach there we won't play."

Bzdelik doesn't mind playing Front Range programs, even on the road. But ... "We'll have discussions. We will," Bzdelik when asked about scheduling Air Force in the future. "Right now I've got to straighten some things out. This year I'm playing at Wyoming, at Denver, at Air Force, at Colorado State. I can't play everybody all at home and all on the road. So we kind of have to balance it out."

Bzdelik is trying to get a home-and-home with an SEC opponent. The Buffs will also be making their first-ever trip to the Rainbow Classic in Honolulu next season and will play in the Maui Invitational in 2009.

"Our schedule for next fall is just about complete," Bzdelik said last week. "And there will be no missed days (of class) next fall semester."



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